

PLAN FOR SYSTEM COOPERATION

I. INTRODUCTION:

In establishing these standards, the Rolling Prairie Library System acknowledges that its constituent member libraries, in accordance with eligibility criteria established by the Illinois State Library and its Administrative Rules for membership in a library system (Section 3030.35) are committed to advancing the cause of information access, service, and programs, not only to their own primary clientele, but to the clientele of the System and the State of Illinois library community. Member libraries must similarly agree to accept and observe the provisions of the Illinois State Library Systems Act, the Administrative Rules of the Illinois State Librarian, the Rolling Prairie Library System By-Laws, the Rolling Prairie Library System Plan for System Cooperation, the Rolling Prairie Library System Long-Range Plan, and all other rules of the Rolling Prairie Library System.

The Rolling Prairie Library System recognizes that to become a role model for quality library service to the citizens of its constituted area of responsibility, and indeed the State of Illinois, that it must develop and coordinate the strengths of its individual libraries to do collectively that which they cannot do individually. With this model in mind, the following standards have been established for the Rolling Prairie Library System and its member libraries. These standards are not intended to conflict with, act as a substitute for, nor supplant those standards or measures already used by accrediting agencies, governmental bodies, or other duly authorized agencies concerned with such matters in various types of libraries.

II. DEFINITIONS:

"Library." Unless otherwise defined as a public library by statute, an entity which serves the basic information and library needs of its constituents through a bibliographically organized collection of library materials and has at least one employee who works at least 15 hours per week as the librarian. The collection must have permanent financial support, be accessible centrally, and occupy identifiable quarters in one principal location. These requirements can be met through contractual services provided by another library.

"Academic Library." The library or libraries of an institution of education beyond the secondary level.

"Public Library." A tax-supported public library established by or as a governmental unit which either is authorized to levy a tax for library purposes, or which supports the library at least in part from local tax revenues other than federal revenue sharing. Such a library is established by a city, village, incorporated town, township, county or library district under the Illinois Local Library Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 81, pars. 1-0.1 et seq.) [75 ILCS 5], the Village Library Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 81, pars. 16 b.9 et seq.), [75 ILCS 40], Division 5-38 of the Counties Code, Public County Library Service (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 34, pars. 5-380001 et seq.) [55 ILCS 5/Div. 5-38], the Village Library Conversion Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 81, par. 27.31h et seq.) [75 ILCS 45], the Library Property Sale Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 18, pars. 27.99 et seq.) [75 ILCS 55], and the Illinois Public Library District Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 81, pars. 1001-1 et seq.) [75 ILCS 15]. This definition excludes free public libraries established by villages but not supported at least in part from local tax revenues, and incorporated free public libraries not established by a governmental unit.

"School Library." The library or libraries of an elementary and/or secondary school district, or private elementary and/or secondary schools under a single governing authority.

"Special Library." The library of, or under the governing authority of, any body or institution not defined elsewhere, in the Administrative Rules for Systems as established by the State Librarian.

III. CATEGORIES OF SYSTEM MEMBERSHIP

- A. "Developmental Library Membership" Category for a library which can meet the Definition of a "Library" as well as the Definition applying to their specific type of library, but cannot meet the Criteria for Full System Membership. A public library shall also meet either the financial requirements for state per capita grants to public libraries as stated in the Act or levy a tax that produces a revenue of \$6.00 per capita. Developmental members would be eligible for the following services: state grants, consulting, system communications, and continuing education. Representatives from developmental member libraries are not eligible for system board status.
- B. "Full System Membership." Category for a library which can meet the Definition of a "Library" as well as the Definition applying to their specific type of library, and can additionally meet the Criteria for Full System Membership. Full System members are eligible for all System services including state grants, consulting, continuing education, reciprocal borrowing, delivery, interlibrary loan, reference, and automation/bibliographic access. A full member is also eligible for voting representation on the Board of Directors.

IV. CRITERIA FOR FULL SYSTEM MEMBERSHIP

- A. An academic library must either be accredited, or making significant progress toward accreditation, by the agency empowered to grant such status. Institutional enrollment, collection size, and annual growth rate of collection determine the number of librarians required by a higher educational institution. At no time will the number of professional librarians (possessing a Master's degree in librarianship) be less than one who works at least 37 ½ hours per week during the academic year.
- B. A public library must be open at least 20 hours per week. It must be staffed by at least one paid employee whose primary duty is to serve the library as a librarian. Additionally that employee must work at least 20 hours per week during times when the library is open. The library must have a line item in their budget for materials. The library must also maintain a card or electronic catalog for access to its collection. The library must issue library cards with an expiration date to patrons.
- C. A school district or private school must be recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education. Public school districts will be affiliated as school districts.

There must be a library in 50% of attendance centers. Attendance centers are defined as Elementary, Intermediate, Middle, Junior High or High Schools.

There must be a minimum of one qualified librarian in a school district or private school who works in a library(ies), as librarian, for a minimum 50% of the hours required for full time staff per week. There must be trained staff in all attendance centers with libraries. The qualified librarian hired by the school district could provide this training. Private schools must have a qualified librarian or a librarian with an MSLIS degree.

A qualified librarian is an employee who has a teacher certificate, if applicable, and at least 18 semester hours in media and/or library science. This individual should possess competence and specialization in both library media and subject areas in order to provide leadership in the development of services.

The school district or private school must have a line item in their education budget for library materials.

The libraries must also maintain a card or electronic catalog for access to its collection.

If the loss of qualified personnel causes a library to no longer meet this criteria and a qualified librarian cannot be hired, full membership status will continue for a period of three years while the new librarian actively works towards qualified librarian status.

- D. A special library must be open at least 20 hours per week. It must be staffed by at least one paid employee whose primary duty is to serve as a librarian. Additionally that employee must work at least 20 hours per week during times when the library is open. The library must have a line item in their budget for materials or monetary support provided in the organizations budget. The library must also maintain a card or electronic catalog for access to its collection.
- E. To maintain full membership the member library must send at least one staff member from the library to one continuing education event each year. This event could be training or CE sponsored by RPLS, attendance at a professional library association conference, training/CE sponsored by another library system or professional library association, or library science or applicable college courses relevant to the library field, i.e. computers, administration.

V. MEMBER LIBRARY RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE SYSTEM:

- A. Regardless of library affiliation, member libraries now and in the future will assume responsibility for:
 - 1. Handling the majority of their own patrons' needs for library materials and services. Library collections and resources should reflect the formally assessed needs of the library's primary clientele.
 - 2. Providing reciprocal borrowing for member public libraries and reciprocal access for all member libraries. Both services are to be provided on intra-system and inter-system levels. Reviewing possibilities for expanding and/or consolidating efforts to address unmet needs. (Full System Membership only)
 - 3. Exploring and encouraging cooperative arrangements among libraries in the System's geographical area of responsibility, which may include: cooperative collection development efforts; automation/bibliographic access; participation in Serials of Illinois Libraries Online (SILO); System studies and programs for addressing the informational needs of inhabitants of Rolling Prairie Library System's area of responsibility and the State of Illinois through informational access and borrowing. (Full System Membership only)
 - 4. Annually submitting a Profile Sheet to the System and any other evidence as the System may reasonably require from them for evaluation and planning of activities within the System.
 - 5. Working toward fulfilling the Plan for System Cooperation and the Standards for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems.
 - 6. Participating whenever practical in relevant and beneficial grant programs.
 - 7. Cooperating in the provision of System services and in some cases assisting in providing System services, by following the guidelines for member library responsibilities given in the RPLS Procedures Manual.
- B. All System members, and applicants for membership, will adhere to requirements as stipulated in of the Rolling Prairie Library System By-Laws. Additionally, libraries will attend to the following:

1. Shall adopt a plan for making significant progress toward meeting the most current appropriate certifying, accrediting, and/or professional organization standards applicable to the type of library they represent.
- C. Regardless of standards employed and applied to member libraries, as well as future applicants for System membership, these System standards will build upon: STRENGTHS rather than WEAKNESSES; PROGRESS TOWARD acceptable standards rather than maintaining a STATUS QUO; and affirm the statement on page 3 of Serving Our Public "The standards are not a celebration of mediocrity nor are they intended to provide a level of comfort by showing activities or statistics that represent a hypothetical average. Rather the standards provide a path, sometimes difficult, to an ideal."

VI. ROLLING PRAIRIE LIBRARY SYSTEM RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. Help existing libraries of all types to reach their full potential by:
 1. Developing member library capabilities.
 2. Supplementing member library services.
 3. Encourage member library participation in grant programs available to libraries through the provision of continuing education and consulting support.
- B. Facilitate cooperative activities among libraries and promote interlibrary cooperation.
- C. Promote library service within the System area.
- D. Promote public support and awareness of libraries.
- E. Encourage effective management of library resources and services.
- F. Fulfill the goals of the System as set forth in its Long-Range Plan

VII. DEVELOPMENTAL LIBRARY MEMBERSHIP PROCESS:

- A. Academic, school, and special libraries seeking membership must at least meet the Illinois State Library minimum criteria (developmental library category). Public libraries seeking membership must at least meet the Illinois State Library minimum criteria (developmental library category) and the eligibility criteria as established by the Illinois State Library in its Administrative Rules for membership in a library system (Section 3030.35) upon application to be accepted.
- B. As part of the application for developmental membership, the library shall submit a developmental plan which sets forth the library's annual goals and explains how the library will meet the criteria for full membership in the library system. The developmental member shall report annually to the library system on which goals have been met and on any deviations from the plan to become a full member of the system.
- C. Anytime a library in the developmental library membership category meets the criteria for full membership, the library will then be placed in the category of full System membership.
- D. Anytime a member library fails to meet RPLS standards for full System membership, they may be placed in the developmental library member category. Anytime a member library does not meet

the criteria for developmental library membership, such library will be notified of membership suspension proceedings.

- E. Suspension of a library from membership will be subject to the procedures for notification and appeal found in the System's By-Laws and Section 3030-115 of the Administrative Rules for Library Systems.
- F. Any library not meeting full membership requirements may be classified as a developmental library member if they meet the Definition of "Developmental Library Membership." A developmental library member must make progress toward full System membership. Progress will be determined by the System and must be cumulative. Timetable for progress:
 - 1. A library is given 5 years to demonstrate progress.
 - 2. If no annual progress is made, suspension proceedings will begin.
 - 3. If, at the end of the 5 years, a library does not meet full System membership requirements, suspension proceedings will begin.
 - 4. An additional year of developmental membership may be granted to a library if the library system determines that extraordinary circumstances interrupted progress toward meeting the criteria for full membership.